Modernisation of coal mines

3454. SHRI SURESH PACHOURI: Will the Minister of MINES AND MINERALS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of measures taken by Government to modernise the coal mines, both for underground as well as open cast mines; and

(b) how far these measures have helped in raising productivity?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF MINES AND MINERALS [DR. (SHRIMATI) RITA VERMA]: (a) and (b) Modernisation of coal mines is a continuous process which includes / involves, *inter-alia,* re-organisation of existing mines, introduction of modern technology and opening of new mines for enhancing production and productivity. These steps have indeed helped in raising productivity. The increase in productivity measured in Output per manshift (O.M.S.) is shown below:—

PRODUCTIVITY (Output perman shift)

(In tonnes)

Year	Coal India Limited			Singareni collieries Company Limited		
	Underground	Opencast	Overall	Underground	Opencast	Overall
1997-98 (Actual)	0.57	5.07	1.93	0.76	7.01	1.45
1998-99 (Actual)	0.59	5.52	2.03	0.75	6.78	1.42
1999-2000 (Provisional)	0.60	5.38	2.05	0.75	7.83	1.55

The above table shows that in CIL, the overall productivity has gone up. SCCL has also witnessed growth in productivity except in 1998-99 which was due to strike.

Royalty on coal to Tamil Nadu

3455. SHRI S. AGNIRAJ: Will the Minister of MINES AND MINERALS be pleased to state:

(a) the year-wise amount of Royalty paid by the Central Government to Tamil Nadu for coal mining during the last five years;

(b) whether the State Government has requested for enhancing the royalty on coal mining; and

(c) if so, the decision taken by the Central Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF MINES AND MINERALS [DR. (SMT.) RITA VERMA]: (a) to (c) No coal mining is done in

the State of Tamil Nadu since as per information available with the Government, no evidence of coal reserves has so far been detected in the State. Therefore, the question of payment of royalty to the Government of Tamil Nadu for coal mining does not arise. However, a proposal for enhancement of the existing rate of royalty on lignite has been received from Government to Tamil Nadu and is under consideration of the Government.

Exploration and mining of coal by private sector companies

3456. SHRI ANANTA SETHI: Will the Minister of MINES AND MINERALS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have cleared the proposal to allow private sector companies into exploration and mining of coal and lignite;

(b) if so, which are the coal and lignite areas earmarked for private sector;

(c) the steps taken to amend the Coal Mines Nationalisation Act, 1973 for the purpose; and

(d) the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF MINES & MINERALS [DR. (SMT.) RITA VERMA]: (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Earmarking of coal and lignite areas for the private sector has not yet been done by the Government.

(c) and (d) The Goa! Mines (Nationalisation) Amendment Bill, 2000 proposes to induct a new provision in the Coal Mines (Nationalisation) Act, 1973 for non-captive coal and lignite mining as well as exploration of coal and lignite- resources by the Indian companies.

Proposals to merge BALCO and NALCO

3457. SHRI ANANTA SETHI: Will the Minister of MINES AND MINERALS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have a proposal to merge Bharat Aluminium Company (BALCO) with the National Aluminium Company (NALCO);

(b) if so, the reasons for the merger of these two premier companies; and

(c) the steps taken in this regard?